Liquor Ban and it's Impact on Women Under Below Poverty Line: A Sociological Study of Patna City

Proposed Synopsis

For

Ph. D. in Sociology (Faculty of Social Science)

Under

LALIT NARAYAN MITHILA UNIVERSITY,
KAMESHWARANAGAR, DARBHANGA

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1. Topic of the Research Work

Liquor Ban and it's Impact on Women Under Below Poverty Line: A Sociological Study of Patna City

2. Statement of the Research Problem

Bihar is India's one of the poorest state in India, characterized by low literacy rate, high gender gap in literacy rate, low sex ratio and low level of per capita income as well low Human Development Index (HDI) value as per India Human Development Report, 2011. However, there has been a remarkable change in last few years in the economy of Bihar. As reported in the Bihar Economic Survey, the per capita GSDP at factor cost (at constant price) has increased from Rs. 8773 to Rs. 25074 during 2004- 05 to 2012-13. The economy of Bihar has grown at the rate of 12% during 2006-2013 compared to 5.7% during 1999 to 2006 and this growth rate is one of the highest in the country (Government of Bihar, 2014). The income distribution pattern, however, is highly unequal across districts. In Bihar, more than 89% of the population live in rural areas (Census India, 2011) with agriculture being a key

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economic activity. However, the share of primary sector in state GSDP has shown a decline in last few years and it came down to 22.4 percent for the triennium ending 2012-13; whereas, share of income from service sector has increased substantially. Given this situation, the challenge is to sustain the growth of the state. As in one hand, economic growth provides resources to permit sustained improvements in human development, on the other hand equitable income distribution, resource allocation, expansion of improvements in the quality of the labour force are important contributors to economic growth and the economic growth itself will not be sustained unless preceded or accompanied by improvements in human development.

In the pursuit of a society where every woman finds solace within her home and community, away from the clutches of domestic violence and with assured equal rights, the state government of Bihar implemented a profound policy shift in 2016—a comprehensive alcohol ban, meticulously designed to provide a sanctuary of safety for women within their own households and to confront the rampant issue of domestic and intimate partner violence. This strategic policy enactment, which took effect on April 1, 2016, entailed an all-encompassing ban on the production, storage, transportation, and sale of various alcoholic beverages, spanning from Indian-made foreign liquor (IMFL) to country liquor and spiced concoctions.

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Contextualizing this policy within the pre-ban landscape reveals an alarming statistic: Bihar stood sixth in the nation's alcohol consumption ranking, with an average annual per capita intake of 14.7 liters, as per 2011-12 data from the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). Twenty-nine percent of men and less than 1% of women aged 15 and above acknowledged alcohol consumption, according to the 2015-16 round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS).

The impact on Bihari women is harder to assess. Eight years on from the ban, a preliminary analysis by the Institute for Human Development in Delhi found a dramatic decline in alcohol consumption, from nearly a third of male adults before the ban to 15% afterwards.

Nevertheless, it was found that the substantial decline in drinking could make "a significant difference" to women's lives and families' economic wellbeing.

In 2017 Bihar's government organized a human chain of some 200 million people, estimated to stretch nearly 7,000 miles, in support of prohibition. The state has watered down the penalties but the ban persists.

Many studies have been done on impact of liquor ban, but there is the dearth of study on impact of liquor ban on women under BPL families. The present study will try its best to fill up this gap on impact of liquor ban on women under BPL families and the study would be conducted in

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the vulnerable areas of Patna city where women under BPL families were facing different problems due to liquor use.

3. Research Coverage: Theme & Area

The term ban refers to legal prevention of the manufacture, storage, transportation, distribution, sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages with the aim of obtaining total abstinence through legal means. Prohibition and temperance have had an overlapping history in many countries since ancient times like in ancient China, Aztec civilisation and feudal Japanese society.

The anti-liquor movement in the West is nearly two-centuries old. An abstinence pledge was introduced by churches in the United States as early as 1800. One of the landmarks in the internationalization of the movement was the organization of the World Prohibition Conference in London, in 1909. It was instrumental in the formation of the International Prohibition Confederation, embracing the United States, the European countries and a few other industrialized countries of the world. Nationwide prohibition was enforced in the United States in 1920 (via 18th Amendment and National Prohibition Act). However, post 1933 a tilt towards liberalization was seen as countries were unable to stop illicit liquor sale and were losing out on revenue. In 1933, the National Prohibition Act was repealed in the U.S.

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Current status of prohibition in the world

Most countries that introduced prohibition have withdrawn or liberalised the measure like the U.S, Japan, China etc. At present there is complete prohibition of liquor in 5 countries in the Middle-East/North Africa which include Afghanistan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Sudan. Some other countries like Brunei Darussalam, Comoro, Iran, Kuwait, Maldives, Mauritania, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria and Yemen – prohibit alcohol for Muslim citizens only. The United Arab Emirates allows for some sale of alcohol except for the region of Sharjah.

Current status of prohibition of liquor in India

Entry 51 in the State List makes 'Alcohol for human consumption' a subject matter of States. This provides States the power to make laws and charge duties on alcoholic liquors for human consumption. At present, ban exists in the States of Gujarat, Bihar, Nagaland and Mizoram; while partial bans are existent in Lakshadweep and Manipur. Some States like Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala had tried to implement prohibition of liquor but abolished it due to ineffectiveness.

Current status of prohibition of liquor in India

Ever since the government of Bihar prohibited liquor sales in the state in 2016, it has invited scathing criticism for is substantial failure to implement the ban and for the several adverse consequences that the move has thrust on the people of Bihar. The upholding of high moral

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ground in the state's world of real politic seems to be an exercise in madness with no method. One of the axioms of governance is that any policy with political, social, economic, or other value ought to be first examined in the scale of implementability. What is not implementable may not be operationalised despite the nobility of the cause. Bihar has failed to apply this simple test in the present instance. Bihar imposed complete prohibition in the state in April 2016, drawing its inspiration from Article 47 of the Indian Constitution, which directs the state to endeavour to prohibit the consumption of intoxicating drinks and drugs that are injurious to health. This was also the Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's election promise to the women of the state who have suffered on account of the excessive drinking of their husbands and other male family members. Prohibition laws were made draconian to deal with the issue of alcoholism. Some of the law's worst features are holding the entire family liable to imprisonment if any family member violated the liquor ban, and imposing a collective fine on a whole village if there was any violation of the prohibition. Even such harsh laws failed to deter alcohol consumption in the state. Bihar's location itself made the state vulnerable. The state shares its borders with Nepal, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh. None of these states practice prohibition, and there is evidence that liquor is flowing into Bihar from the neighbouring states, given West Bengal and Jharkhand's phenomenal

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rise in excise revenue. Bihar, on the other hand, was losing revenue, and the state's hospitality and trade sectors were taking a hit.

4.Review of Literature

Previous scholarly work has documented that greater alcohol consumption leads to more crime but much of it is based in industrialized countries (Luca et al., 2015).

Carpenter and Dobkin, (2010) also notes that a limitation of existing research is that it only focuses on violent crimes and ignoring the impact on non-violent crimes "may lead us to miss a substantial part of the social costs of alcohol consumption".

Past studies have documented the deterrent effect of police vigilance on crime, which suggest that in the face of reduced band-width, crime is likely to rise (Munyo et al., 2016). Conventional understanding of crime spillovers has been limited to geographic applications (strict enforcement in one region leads to negative externalities in neighboring region) or inter-temporal/dynamic settings (strict enforcement today may lead criminals to postpone crime decisions to tomorrow) or trade-offs between private and social expenditures (Chalfin and McCrary, 2017).

Several studies have shed light on the unintended consequences of prohibition and criminalization of activities. These inadvertent implications can be stemming from the emergence of a shadow economy, which is de-facto outside the legal purview. Friedman (1991)

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provides early evidences in this regard. It argues that "prohibition can cause more crime by diverting police resources away from deterring non-drug crimes and by incentivizing market participants to resort to violence in disputing market share and enforcing agreements". More recent work also posits a similar line of thought (Cunningham and Shah, 2018).

4.Study Area

Below Poverty Line, is a benchmark used by the Indian Government to identify individuals or families who are living below the poverty line and need the most help. The government implements several programs to provide for their basic food, shelter, and clothing requirements.

Patna city area in Bihar has been selected as the study area. There are many families in this area belonging to BPL and their male members were habituated of taking liquor. This intake of liquor among male members created so many problems and difficulties in the life of their families. On the other hand after the ban on liquor by Government side brought so many happiness in their life. This is the reason for the selection of Patna city as study area, so that the impact of liquor would be studied.

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5.Objective of the Study

1. To diagnose the social impact of liquor ban on women under below poverty line;
2. To explore out the economic impact of liquor ban on women under below poverty line;
3. To clear out the health impact of liquor ban on women under below poverty line.

6.Hypothesis of the Study

1. Due to liquor ban there is decrease in domestic violence against women and they are gaining social prestige in the society;
2. It is the result of liquor ban that the women are practicing money saving and increasing their standard of living;
3. Liquor ban improved the health condition, physical fitness and life expectancy of women.

7.Contribution of the Research work to the discipline & Allied discipline

In this direction, this research provides a deep and subtle knowledge in various subjects, and is helpful in social development. This research will prove helpful in diagnosing the impact of liquor ban on the family and society in Bihar. The contribution of the presented research to sociology and other disciplines, economics and political

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science is also important. The presented research provides direction to the intellectual development of personality and human knowledge.

8.Methological Approach

To complete the research, a research design is required. Under this, fundamental questions related to research problems, hypotheses, process of sample selection, tabulation etc. will be included. The present research will be based on descriptive cum analytical research design.

Fact Finding

In the present research, both primary and secondary sources will be used to collect facts. The technical basis of the primary source will be the interview schedule. The basis of secondary sources will be government documents and statistics, non-government document statistics, use of available documentation material, historical sources, content analysis and other previous research works.

Sample selection of the study

For the present research work, Patna city of Bihar will be selected on the basis of purposive sampling method. A survey will be conducted to find out some wards from the city areas where BPL families are the inhabitants of the areas. In this way around 200 women respondents will be selected from the BPL families. A complete survey will be conducted on the selected respondents and through the interview schedule; their

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responses will be collected in the form of facts on questions related to the study.

9.Tentative Chapterization

Chapter-1 : Introduction

Chapter-2 : Review of Literature

Chapter-3 : Study Area

Chapter-4 : Research Methodology

Chapter-5 : Background of the Respondents

Chapter-6 : Liquor Ban and Social Impact on BPL Women

Chapter-7 : Liquor Ban and Economic Impact on BPL Women

Chapter-8 : Liquor Ban and Health Impact on BPL Women

Chapter-9 : Conclusion and Findings

Appendix: Interview – Schedule

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